

"A light to the nations"



January 2018

VANUATU NEWS FROM LOUIS & JANE FAULSTICH

Friends in Christ,

It was our second Christmas and first New Year in the Village. All was quiet at our house (not even a rat was stirring.) We aren't much on keeping traditions, but we decided to revive the taste of traditional fresh baked cinnamon rolls. Ours were forged on the stovetop and were devoid of frosting, but they were enjoyed nonetheless because it's the thought that counts. Holidays are a little different on the remote islands of Vanuatu. Last year we learned that celebrations are not so joyful for some. Apparently the behavior on Christmas Eve can be so wild that women and children sometimes hide in the jungle to escape drunk family members.

We just don't think it's right for Christmas to be associated with fear and revelry, so this year on Christmas Eve we held an evening service so people could hear the story of Christ's birth. The pastor announced that the church would be a place of refuge for those who didn't like the parties, and we had a good turnout. People enjoyed this alternative to the all-night carousing; feeling spiritually nourished to learn what Christmas means for believers. The question came up a few times if it's ok to be drunk on Christmas (as drunk men were shouting from the road). Perhaps catching a sense of Christ's holiness in entering the World, people felt a conviction to challenge the local disregard for our Lord during this time. In coming years we hope to see a growing contrast between believers and unbelievers in the way Christmas is celebrated. Strangely enough New Year's Eve normally has a midnight service, although drinking remains a big problem. We didn't worry about sleeping early and missing anything because nowhere on Tanna did the sound of screams, church bells, and conch shells miss the cue.



UP NEXT

As we start on a recording project to fix some glitches with the audio Bible, our little Suzuki gains yet another title. Apart from being a go-anywhere mobile office and cellular network booster, it has now become the ideal noise free recording studio. Trying to get a good recording for the audio Bible is challenging in any village setting. Between the children, cicadas, and chickens, the hard work put into a recording project often leaves missionaries dreaming of better conditions. With the tight enclosure of a modern automobile the ambient noise is drastically reduced. Of course, here in the tropics, sitting in a truck with the windows rolled up does have its drawbacks, but if we stay in the shade and choose the cooler times to work, it's comfortable enough. We are about to complete the recording of Mark, and will have more books to fix this year.

JANUARY PRAYERS

A local teenage boy named David has been very ill since April; suffering from fevers, swelling, and crippling joint pain throughout his body. The family is convinced of black magic and have insisted on clairvoyant remedies which may have prolonged the sickness. Just this week they gave in and decided to try the hospital, yet after four nights he still hasn't been seen by a doctor. Many people have prayed for him, but we feel those prayers cannot be answered while he seeks healing from conflicting spiritual forces. Pray for the people of Tanna to leave their divided trust in magic, and seek God's healing with their whole heart.

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